

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

FACULTY OF COMPUTER SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Chairman: Dr R D H Walker

Secretary: Mrs M A Sammons

The Directors of Studies Forum held on Tuesday 2 July 2013 at 10:00 in FW11 in the William Gates Building

Present

Prof J M Bacon (J)	Dr J M Hayman (E)	Dr A C Rice (Q) Observer
Dr A R Beresford (R)	Prof A Hopper (HoD)	Dr B Roman (H)
Dr P J Buttery (HH)	Prof I M Leslie (CHR)	Mrs M A Sammons
Prof AA Copestake (Observer)	Mrs M A Levitt (Dept Administrator)	(Teaching Admin Ast)
Dr A N Donnelly (PEM)	Dr K Moody (K)	Mrs C Stewart PA to HoD (Observer)
Dr J K Fawcett (Chu)	Dr R D Mullins (JN)	Dr S Taraskin (CTH)
Dr T E Forster (CLH)	Dr S J Murdoch (CHR)	Dr C P Town (W).
Dr D J Greaves (CC)	Dr A Norman (PET&T)	Dr G Titmus (CAI)
Mr C K Hadley (G&SID)	Ms D E Pounds	Dr R D H Walker (Q)
Dr R K Harle (D&F& ED)	(Teaching Admin Mgr)	Dr R Watts (SE)

1. Apologies for absence

Dr A F Blackwell (D)
Dr T E Forster (CLH)
Dr S B Holden (T)
Prof L C Paulson (CL)
Prof P Robinson (CAI)

2. Matters arising from previous minutes

Point 4 from 2013-01-08 minutes. Names of students not taking up offers are to be collated with reasons of why applicants did not take up their places. **RKH**

3. Notification of any other business

i. RDWH read from the script of the Chair of University Admissions Forum. Dr Harle had recommended a way forward for handling more consistently applications for CS with Mathematics. Colleges should make it clear to applicants that in order to admit first year Computer Science with Maths course, they must take the Sixth Term Examination Papers (STEP). Without satisfactory performance, they will not be permitted to do it. The STEP requirements will only apply for applicants wishing to follow the CS with Mathematics route. Where students have an inappropriate background for CS with Natural Science or CS with Psychology (i.e. the students can only be admitted for CS with Mathematics), then the STEP element should form part of the main offer.

It was agreed that no changes should be made to the entrance requirements for CS with Natural Science or the CS with Psychology routes. It was noted that the Computer Science Directors of Studies Forum was also recommending that Colleges use discretion as to whether to pool or offer for CS without Mathematics when there is question over an applicant's mathematical ability. This proposal was not approved by the Admissions Forum as it is contrary to the agreed Winter Pool rules. It was agreed that it was still in the applicant's best interest to first be placed in the pool to maximise the possibility of getting an offer for their preferred route.

4. Review of examinations for 2013

Part II mark books were circulated electronically, no particular issues were noted with Part II or IB and Part IA results had just been received. It was noted that the marks were available on CamSIS very quickly this year.

It was noted that computer scientists were failing to reach the top 25% in Natural Science subjects. Some members expressed a preference for a CS only course as is currently offered elsewhere including at Oxford University. The Chairman suggest further consideration be given to finding an alternative option which IA students would enjoy.

5. Changes to Part IA course content

1. It was noted the course is undergoing minor amendments and Discrete Maths will no longer be taken as part of Paper 1. Tick exercises will remain the same and the practical sessions may be on Wednesday afternoons as well as the present Thursday.

6. Handling of Computer Science with Maths applicants
(See point 3 above)

7. Common Admissions Test

It was noted that a number of colleges do not use the TSA and each college has a different test.

8. Addressing the gender issue

Computer Science applications from female students remains at around 10% with particularly low application levels from within the UK. DP reported that Queen Mary College, London University has achieved a female intake of 25%. The reasons are not documented but it is believed they recruit strongly from local ethnic minority groups.

RDHW reported that the GCSE website was aiming to attract females into computing. It was agreed to keep monitoring the area.

9. Senior Tutors' Standing Committee on Education

Nothing to report

10. Any other business

i. Supervision hours per college

Are some colleges supervising more than others? It was suggested that by requesting for supervision statistics to be de-anonymised and the removal of degrading students, it may create a truer representation and enable rectifying action to be taken. The committee recommend the matter be taken back to college supervision tutors.

ii. Gap years

There was discussion about the merits of taking a gap year. It was noted that maths skills decline in a year away from study. The company, Year in Industry have instigated exams during this period to mitigate this. Engineers are encouraged to take a gap year, colleges are impartial and encourage internships.

iii. SET awards

DP reminded Directors of Studies to recommend students to apply for the set award nomination on 26 September 2013.

iv. Successor to Chairman of DoS

A chairman is required for the academic year of 2014-15. A subject convenor for the winter pool is also required for which the remuneration of £200 is paid. It may not necessarily be the same person to carry out both roles. It was noted that it would be useful to appoint someone from within the department for the convenor post. It was

suggested the prospective chairman, shadow the role for a full academic year. It is anticipated the role will be arranged for September with the closure of UCAS on 15 October 2013.

v. Announcements

Austin Donnelly is to step down from Pembroke College. Chris Hadley will take over at Pembroke and no longer be DoS at Sidney Sussex.

11. Date of next meeting will be arranged mid Michaelmas term for early January 2014.